

Docket No. 2003-054-TAP

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A tape leader apparatus for pulling tape from a
2 reel, said tape leader apparatus comprising:
3 a first reel for receiving tape from a second reel;
4 a first leader coupled to said first reel;
5 a second leader coupled to a free end of said tape,
6 said tape being wound around said second reel;
7 a button coupled to a first end of said first leader
8 and protruding from a first surface of said first leader;
9 and
10 said second leader including an aperture for
11 accepting said button to couple said first and second
12 leaders together.
- 1 2. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:
3 said second leader including a locking slit;
4 said button being received within said locking slit
5 when said first and second leaders are coupled together.
- 1 3. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:
3 a base coupled to said surface and said button for
4 supporting said button above said surface.
- 1 4. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 3,
2 further comprising:

Docket No. 2003-054-TAP

3 said base and said button together being mushroom-
4 shaped.

1 5. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

3 said first leader having a first portion and a
4 second portion;

5 said first portion having a first end connected to
6 said first reel and a second end connected to said second
7 portion;

8 said second portion including a first end and a
9 second end, said first end being a narrow neck portion
10 that is narrower than a width of said first portion; and

11 said button being coupled to said second end of said
12 second portion.

1 6. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

3 said first leader including a plurality of spacing
4 apertures for providing space for receiving said button
5 and preventing indentations in said tape when said first
6 and second leaders are coupled together.

1 7. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 6,
2 further comprising:

3 said plurality of spacing apertures being spaced
4 throughout said first leader one revolution apart.

1 8. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

Docket No. 2003-054-TAP

3 a wrapping aperture in said first leader located at
4 said second end of said first portion for receiving said
5 button when said first leader is wound on a hub.

1 9. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

3 a gap formed between a bottom of said protruding
4 button and said first surface for receiving said second
5 leader when said first and second leaders are coupled
6 together.

1 10. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

3 said first reel having a hub;
4 said hub having a recess for receiving said button
5 when said first and second leaders and said tape are
6 wrapped around said hub.

1 11. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

3 said second leader including a single spacing
4 aperture for providing space for receiving said button
5 and preventing indentations in said tape when said first
6 and second leaders are coupled together.

1 12. The tape leader apparatus according to claim 1,
2 further comprising:

3 said second leader including a first and second
4 flange;

Docket No. 2003-054-TAP

5 said first flange located along a first side of said
6 second leader; and
7 said second flange located along a second side of
8 said second leader.

1 13. A tape leader apparatus for pulling tape from a
2 reel, said tape leader apparatus comprising:
3 a first reel for receiving tape from a second reel;
4 a first leader coupled to said first reel;
5 a second leader coupled to a free end of said tape,
6 said tape being wound around said second reel;
7 a button coupled to a first end of said first leader
8 and protruding from a first surface of said first leader;
9 said second leader including an aperture for
10 accepting said button;
11 said second leader including a locking slit;
12 said button being received within said locking slit
13 when said first and second leaders are coupled together;
14 a base coupled to said surface and said button for
15 supporting said button above said surface;
16 said base and said button together being mushroom-
17 shaped;
18 a gap formed between a bottom of said protruding
19 button and said first surface for receiving said second
20 leader when said first and second leaders are coupled
21 together;
22 said first leader having a first portion and a
23 second portion;

Docket No. 2003-054-TAP

24 said first portion having a first end connected to
25 said first reel and a second end connected to said second
26 portion;

27 said second portion including a first end and a
28 second end, said first end being a narrow neck portion
29 that is narrower than a width of said first portion;
30 said button being coupled to said second end of said
31 second portion;

32 said first leader including a plurality of spacing
33 apertures for providing space for receiving said button
34 and preventing indentations in said tape when said first
35 and second leaders are coupled together;

36 said plurality of spacing apertures being spaced
37 throughout said first leader one revolution apart;

38 a wrapping aperture in said first leader located at
39 said second end of said first portion for receiving said
40 button when said first leader is wound on a hub;

41 said first reel having a hub;

42 said hub having a recess for receiving said button
43 when said first and second leaders and said tape are
44 wrapped around said hub;

45 said second leader including a single spacing
46 aperture for providing space for receiving said button
47 and preventing indentations in said tape when said first
48 and second leaders are coupled together;

49 said second leader including a first and second
50 flange;

51 said first flange located along a first side of said
52 second leader; and

Docket No. 2003-054-TAP

53 said second flange located along a second side of
54 said second leader.

1 14. A method for pulling tape from a reel, said method
2 comprising:
3 inserting a button that is coupled to a first end of
4 a first leader through an aperture that is located in a
5 second leader;
6 said first leader being coupled to a first reel;
7 said second leader being coupled to a free end of a
8 tape that is wound around said second reel, said first
9 reel receiving said tape from said second reel; and
10 locking said first and second leaders together by
11 pulling said first leader away from said second leader
12 causing said button to move out of said aperture and into
13 a locking slit that is formed at one side of said
14 aperture.